The Field Museum

Natural News

Weekly Staff Newsletter
August 4, 2000

CCUC News

Center for Cultural Understanding and Change

Alaka Wali was invited to serve on the selection committee for the Margaret Mead Award, offered jointly by the American Anthropological Association and the Society for Applied Anthropology. The Margaret Mead award recognizes the work of a young scholar who has demonstrated the ability to broaden the impact of anthropology on the public at large, in the spirit of Margaret Mead. Alaka will represent the Awards Committee of the American Anthropological Association.

Jaci Gray has been invited by Paul Vallas, CEO of the Chicago Public Schools, to serve on a new advisory board for the development of a Holocaust-based tolerance education curriculum . CPS is one of five pilot districts nationwide in which the curriculum will be developed, taught and evaluated. Steven Spielberg's Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation and the American Association of School Administrators are partners in this initiative.

Over the past two years of our Urban Research Initiative, we have had 24 interns conducting summer long ethnographic research in Chicago. Their research resulted in the first Exploring Community Workshop, held June 28, 2000 here at the museum, and attended by 42 leaders of Chicago civic organizations.

The workshop used the **Living Together** exhibit to deepen understanding of cultural diversity and social connections, and also gave participants an opportunity to explore the value of doing anthropological research in Chicago. Through the workshop, CCUC continues to broaden our audience and demonstrate new uses for the museum's cultural resources. Thanks to staff in the Education and Exhibits departments for valuable suggestions in planning the workshop.

Congratulations to **Rosa Cabrera** who sucessfully completed her preliminary exam and is now officially a PhD candidate in Anthropology at UIC. Rosa was recently awarded the prestigious Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Graduate Scholarship for the academic year 2000-2001 from the University. Rosa has been working with the CCUC team for the last year, specifically in the Cultural Connections program as a researcher/instructor.

We would like to thank all of you who viewed the Disappearing World Film Series. Please direct any questions or comments about the films to Alaka Wali at awali@fmnh.org, or **Steve Nash** at snash@fmnh.org.

Submitted by **Alaka Wali**

FIELD NOTES

Week of August 7

Staff/Volunteer Events

Museum Campus Operations Team
- Monday, 3 p.m., Field Museum

Tae Bo Class
- Monday, 5 p.m., Ground Floor

Aerobics Class
- Tuesday, 5 p.m. , Ground Floor
- Thursday, 5 p.m. , Classroom A

Green Sheet Meeting
- Wednesday, 3 p.m., Special Events

Public/Campus Events

Star Wars: The Magic of Myth
- Exhibit continues

Field Nights
- Thursday, 5:30 to 9 p.m.

Chicago Ping Pong Festival 2000
- Thursday, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

"New Discoveries" curator's office a small success story

When we completed the "Madagascar New Discoveries" installation in the **Life Over Time** exhibition on Monday, July 17, we achieved the following:

- Completed the exhibit on time to meet a schedule compressed from ten weeks down to six
- Opened the exhibit in time for the newsstand appearance of John Flynn's co-authored story in *National Geographic* magazine
- Received the assistance of Museum staff from around the building in supplying both collections- and non-collections based object loans
- Reiterated the "inside-out" theme and reminded visitors of our ongoing research efforts
- And still came in under budget.

Big thanks for this small exhibit are due to:

Miriam Alleyne
John Bates
Theresa Biancheri
Patrick Bradley
Greg Buckley
Carolyn Byrne
Nina Cummings
Kara Deniston
Rayfield Drake
John Flynn
Eric Frazer
Steve Goodman
Jeff Hawkins
Bruce Heimbach
Jaap Hoogstraten
Paula Horecny
Nancy O'Shea
Lance Kirsch
Chap Kusimba
Teresa Lange
John-Henry Marshall
Peggy McNamara
David Mendez
Sheldon Moy
Carter O'Brien
Mike Paha
Rodger Patience
Bruce Patterson
Cassie Redhed
Alan Resetar
Michi Schulenberg
Cap Sease
Christine Sinno
Bill Stanley
Dan Summers
Shelley Ulrich
Hilary Verni
Steve Villano
Janet Voight
Trigg Waller
Bob Weiglein
Dave Willard
Ben Williams

Thanks to all those who lent objects for inclusion in the exhibit, and to the Public Relations department for getting the news out to the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Sun-Times*.

Special kudos to Bob Weiglein for faithfully recreating the curator's office ambience-right down to the kitchen sink, "peanut butter," and live hissing cockroaches.

Submitted by Matt Matcuk

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Arachnologists are Kentucky-bound

This year's annual meeting of the American Arachnological Society (AAS) took place in Lexington, Kentucky. Petra Sierwald, Jason Bond, Nina Sandlin and Paul Marek (Zoology, Insects) represented The Field Museum. Petra, as managing editor or the Journal of Arachnology and as member of the AAS executive committee, took part in various lengthy discussions regarding the future of the journal and the society. Jason Bond (postdoc in Petra's millipede PEET grant) presented a well-received talk on the the Phylogeography of *Aptostichus* in California. For Paul, a summer intern in the millipede program, and Nina, loyal volunteer and spider enthusiast, it was the first time that they attended such a meeting. A large number of talks focused on survey and monitoring work in various North American habitats, which are quite relevant to some of the current work in the Insect Division with regard to the prairie restoration at Swallow Cliff.

From the President's Office

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Today our attendance will surpass the total for all of 1999. 1,500,000 visitors have come to The Field Museum so far this year.

I want to extend my congratulations to all of you on an extraordinary accomplishment. This has required creativity, cooperation and an enormous amount of continuing hard work to achieve this kind of attention and attendance.

Four years ago our attendance was just over 1,200,000. A number of factors have contributed to the growth in attendance.

Clearly the move of Lake Shore Drive and the creation of this great Museum Campus has given us a solid foundation on which to build.

The availability of Halls 6 and 7, now the Yates Center, have enabled us to host a wonderful series of traveling exhibitions capped by the Dead Sea Scrolls earlier this year that attracted 300,000 people. Sue has already brought in hundreds of thousands of people. Our daily attendance has been running double that of last year since May 17 when we unveiled Sue.

But attendance records, exciting as they are, are only a part of the story. They reflect an institution of great strength and vitality.

Our scientific research programs have marked their productivity by a wonderful series of publications in the top ranked journals and in full length books. Our scientific staff is growing. Our collections, the 21,000,000 specimens, are growing on a daily basis as our curators return with specimens from around the world.

Our Environmental and Conservation Biology Program is on a roll and our Center for Cultural Understanding and Change is showing its impact on the Chicago community.

We have had a successful fundraising effort and are poised on the cusp of a major fundraising drive.

Our educational programs will this year serve 350,000 visiting students and reach many more through the Harris Loan Program. In addition, our Field Ambassadors Program reaching out to Chicago schools, the Two of Us Program focused on early childhood development, and our involvement with the Museums and Public Schools Program are further evidences of a robust and successful education effort as we work to support educational reform.

So much of our attendance has come from the exhibits and the creativity and hard work of the Exhibits Department has made all of this excitement possible. Clearly the community now has the message: **We must go to The Field Museum to see the wonders of the world.**

Our restaurant volumes are up over 60% for the year. Store sales are running way beyond any expectation. I particularly want to thank those individuals who have been so effectively dealing with the crowds—our Volunteers, Visitor Services, Museum Stores, Security and Housekeeping staff—all of those individuals who have provided such wonderful welcomes to our visitors. I receive daily communications from people citing specific examples of Field Museum folks who have been so helpful to the disabled, to those who are overwhelmed by the size of the Museum, to those who have lost their children, and to those who need help with language difficulties. We are showing a wonderful, welcoming face to our visitors.

We are striving to make this a great place to work and play—I am delighted with the involvement of the 140 Field Museum colleagues who participated in last evening's Chase Race.

So in conclusion I would like to thank all of you for the wonderful success we have achieved, for the hard work and for the imagination. Have a great weekend—those who are going to enjoy time off as well as those who are handling these record crowds.

It is a great privilege to work with you.

John W. McCarter, Jr.
President & CEO

Costa Rican Fungal Inventory off to a great start

Greg Mueller, Fernando Fernández, John Paul Schmit, Betty Strack, and Ruth Aldana-Gómez (Botany) spent July in Costa Rica undertaking fieldwork, working with the fungal parataxonomists and fungal curators at INBio (Costa Rican National Biodiversity Institute), and fine tuning protocols for the Costa Rican National Fungal Inventory. Greg is the International Coordinator of the project and co-coordinator for the macrofungal component. Fernando is the co-coordinator for the microfungal component. John Paul has been hired by INBio as a consultant to analyze the resulting data and assess the success of the fungal inventory. The fungal inventory is funded in part by a grant to INBio from the World Bank. Greg and Fernando (with Sabine Huhndorf, Botany) each have grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF) Biotic Survey and Inventory Program to support their work in Costa Rica.

This project is by far the most ambitious and rigorous survey of fungi for any tropical region. Macrofungi (mushrooms, bracket fungi, puffballs, etc.), microfungi (in this case restricted to those that can be seen with the aid of a hand lens), and lichenized fungi will be surveyed over the next five years in five Conservation Areas representing most of the ecosystems found in Costa Rica. A combination of opportunistic sampling and plot-based quantitative sampling techniques are being used. The employed protocols were highly rated by an independent consultant, Robert Colwell of the University of Connecticut, hired by the World Bank to assess the progress of the various components of fungus and insect inventories.

Detailed information on the fungal inventory will soon be available on the INBio website at <www.inbio.ac.cr> and we will have a link to these pages on the FMNH mycology website.

Invertebrates announces new collection assistant

The Division of Invertebrates is pleased to welcome Martin Pryzdia as its new Collection Assistant. Many Museum staff already know Marty from his days as a Museum volunteer, and a staff member in Botany (Mycology) and Zoology (Amphibians and Reptiles). Besides all this valuable hands-on experience, Marty has a Master of Science degree in Environmental Biology. We are very glad to have him now on board in Invertebrates.

Submitted by Jochen Gerber

Kudos from a natural history listserv discussion

"This is not an item from the literature per se, but it was an exhibit label that I observed at the Chicago Field Museum last week when I was there to see Sue. It was not on Sue, but was on the introductory material below the pair of mounted elephants in a section that talked about the museum and its collections. Since we are currently fighting for budget money, I copied down their statement which I thought was good:

> **How do we use our collections?**
> Field Museum educators, exhibit designers and exhibit developers use our specimens to create exhibits and educational programs. But our collections are also a massive biological database that researchers use to study the past and present of life on earth.

Short and simple, but I believe clear and accurate."

Robert C. Glotzhober
Curator of Natural History
Ohio Historical Society

Submitted by Al Newton

We extend our condolences to Frantz Eliacin (Mailroom), whose father recently passed away.

Visitation will be held this evening, Friday, August 4, from 7 to 10 p.m. Gatling's Chapel 10113 South Halsted Street, Chicago

The funeral will be held tomorrow, Saturday, August 5, at 10 a.m. Lady of Peace Church 79th Street and Jeffery Boulevard, Chicago

MUSEUM CAMPUS CHICAGO

Operations Team to meet at Field Museum during August

For the month of August, all Museum Campus Operations Team meetings (8/7, 8/14, 8/21 & 8/28) will be held at The Field Museum. All meetings are scheduled for Mondays at 3 p.m. Please call the Museum Campus office at 665-7421 to confirm the meeting location.

Chicago Outdoor Film Festival

Enjoy movie classics outdoors on Tuesdays at sunset! At the first Chicago Outdoor Film Festival, classic films will screen on consecutive Tuesdays. This year's festival is dedicated to Gene Siskel, the award-winning film columnist for the Chicago Tribune and the co-host of "Siskel and Ebert", and celebrates his enormous contributions to Chicago, cinema and journalism.

Remaining screenings for August are: *The Philadelphia Story* (August 8), *Singin' In the Rain* (August 15) and *North by Northwest* (August 22). The Chicago Outdoor Film Festival is presented free of charge by the Mayor's Office of Special Events, Chicago Park District and HBO.

MUSEUM STORES

Kudos to Museum Stores staff for excellent customer service

June 24, 2000

Dear Chris Fiene:

On the 10th of June I wrote: Congratulations on the latest arrival: SUE!!! How can I order one or two of the stuffed dinosaur versions of SUE? I have difficulty walking and it would be a favor if there was some way to order directly. I have reflex systemic dystrophy and the Museum is too large for me to navigate. I know you are REALLY busy these days so please answer at your convenience. Thank you for your kindness.

Today I received the nicest call from Amy Martinez (Museum Store). I wish to commend her kindness & patience. Although the plush T-Rexes shown on the front page of the May 17th *Chicago Tribune* were out of stock, she informed me how I might be able to get two later from backorder!! She

was so courteous as I tried to describe them (the museum shop must be filled with lots of different kinds of dino treasures).

I haven't been to the Field for over seven years now. While I can walk with a cane at work, it is still impossible to be mobile for long periods of time. I sometimes feel so cut off from the things I used to enjoy—Amy's warmth and efficiency made me feel like I was once again in the great main hall.

Please convey my thanks to Amy. And thank you also Chris for taking time to read my letter.

Fondly, a life long lover of dinosaurs,
Karen N. Rybacki
Lombard, Illinois

EDUCATION

Internal Ping-Pong Competition
Get ready for the King Kong of ping-pong festivals!

Mooove over, cows! Make room for Ping-Pong tables. The Field Museum, the Mayor's Office of Special Events, and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs are combining forces to bring Chicago Ping-Pong Festival 2000 to our pastures. Help us kick off this festival by participating in our internal Ping-Pong competition.

When: Aug. 10 and 17, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Where: The North Entrance lobby
Why: Fun, excitement, camaraderie, and the chance to go one-on-one with Education's ace ping pong players **Mary Ellen Munley, Encarnacion Teruel, Beth Adams** and **Bill Ryan,** among others. Afterwards you can check out the exciting bands for Downtown Thursday Nights/Field Nights— Chicago Samba on the 10th and Funkadesi on the 17th—relax with a drink and participate in the drum circle.

Added Bonus: The winner of this competition will have the opportunity to go on to the City Championships on Sept. 23 at Union Station. For more information call Bill Ryan at ext. 7545.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Traffic advisory for the weekend of August 4-6

On Friday morning, August 4, Vice President Al Gore will be in Chicago arriving via O'Hare. His numerous City stops include McCormick Place in the afternoon. Please note that **traffic will be heavier than usual on Friday afternoon** due to the temporary closure of northbound Columbus and westbound Roosevelt when his motorcade leaves McCormick Place. No word yet on any brief stops at the museums.

On Saturday evening, August 5, George Bush will arrive via Midway. Again, streets will be temporarily closed for his motorcade. Expect heavy traffic due to: the closure of Columbus (between Roosevelt and Balbo) for the **Shoot the Bull/3 on 3** event, the **Chicago Fire Game** in Soldier Field at 3 p.m., and the **PanAm Fest** in Soldier Field South Lot at 5 p.m. The closure of Columbus for the 3 on 3 event will begin Friday evening.

EAT DRINK, DANCE, BUT DON'T FEED THE T. REX

Outdoors. Indoors.
Thursday Nights at The Field Museum.

June 22 - August 17, 5:30 - 9:00p.m.
$12 Admission

Great music • Beautiful views of downtown • Food & drink available
Group drumming led by Rhythm Revolution • See Sue

June 29	Bumpus, *High-energy funk*
July 6	Chicago Samba, *Danceable & energetic samba jams*
July 13	Il Kwon Nori, *Drum fest*
July 20	Spirits, *African drumming and dancer/stilt walkers*
July 27	MASS Ensemble, *Inter-disciplinary performance*
August 3	Tatsu Aoki's Miyumi Project, *Asian drumming*
August 10	To Be Announced
August 17	Funkadesi, *World Music*

Sponsored by:

The Field Museum

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